

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 11580 031938Z

61

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-15 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7152

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL MADRAS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 11580

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK, BG

SUBJ: INDIA-

APAKISTAN-BANGLADESH REPATRIATIONS AND AFTER

BEGIN SUMMARY: INDIA EXPECTS THE RATE OF REPATRIATION OF  
BENGALEES, BIHARIS AND POW'S TO PICK UP SOON AND TO CONTINUE  
UNTIL ALL BENGALEES AND POW'S ARE RETURNED, WHETHER OR NOT  
PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH CAN AGREE ON TALKS ON THE 195 POW'S  
TO BE CHARGED WITH WAR CRIMES TRIALS AND ON REPATRIATION OF  
ADDITIONAL BIHARIS. INDIA FEELS UNDER LITTLE PRESSURE TO GET  
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 11580 031938Z

THOSE TALKS GOING, EVEN THOUGH IT RECOGNIZES THAT IMPROVEMENT

OF INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS (AND POSSIBLY SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS TOO) MAY AWAIT THEIR OUTCOME. BHUTTO'S REFERENCE TO KASHMIR IN HIS UN SPEECH INCREASED INDIAN SUSPICIONS. IT SEES HIM AS, AT BEST, KEEPING HIS OPTIONS OPEN. IT IS WILLING

TO WAIT A LONG TIME WHILE PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH SORT OUT WHAT ARE NOW ESSENTIALLY BILATERAL PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

1. REPATRIATION: INDIA UNDERSTANDS CAFDA AND THE UK, BESIDES THE SOVIET UNION, HAVE OFFERED AIRCRAFT FOR REPATRIATION OF BENGALLEES AND BIHARIS. IN VIEW OF THIS AND KNOWN UNHCR PREFERENCE FOR AIR REPATRIATION, INDIA EXPECTS IT WILL BE DONE PRINCIPALLY BY AIR AND WILL PICK UP SUBSTANTIALLY FROM ABOUT MID-OCTOBER. WHILE INDIA CLAIMS IT WILL BE ABLE TO MATCH POW RETURN TO THE PACE OF AIR REPATRIATION, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS NOTE THAT BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE DELAYS IN GOP APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUAL BIHARIS, A VERY HIGH RATE OF AIR REPATRIATION COULD RESULT IN COMPLETION OF THE BENGALLEES/POW EXCHANGE BEFORE THE 70 TO 80,000 BIHARIS HAD BEEN MOVED. THE SWISS HERE ALSO SEE THIS AS A POTENTIAL PROBLEM.

2. UNRESOLVED ISSUES: WORKING-LEVEL FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS MAINTAIN THAT IN ANY CASE THE REPATRIATION OF THE BENGALLEES, THE POW'S, AND THE "SUBSTANTIAL" NUMBER OF BIHARIS WILL PROCEED WHETHER OR NOT TALKS BEGIN ON THE UNRESOLVED ISSUES OF THE 195 POW'S TO BE CHARGED WITH WAR CRIMES AND ON REPATRIATION OF ADDITIONAL BIHARIS TO PAKISTAN. THEY SEE THESE AS PRIMARILY PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH ISSUES AND DO NOT SEE INDIA AS PARTICULARLY INVOLVED ANY LONGER. INDIA CAN KEEP THE 195 INDEFINITELY IF NECESSARY, THEY SAY. WHILE THEY MAY PRIVATELY EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH TIES, THEY ARE ALSO PLEASED TO BE OUT OF THE MIDDLE AND TO HAVE PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER THROUGH THE SWISS ON THE MECHANICS OF REPATRIATION. THE SWISS NOTE THAT THEIR ROLE RIGHT NOW IS MINIMAL--REPATRIATION IS A HUMANITARIAN MATTER BEING HANDLED PRIMARILY BY THE ICRC AND THE UNHCR. BUT THEY EXPECT THEIR SERVICES WILL BE REQUIRED INCREASINGLY AS REPATRIATION ENDS AND AS THE PARTIES TALK ABOUT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

THE SWISS WONDER IF MAYBE THEY WILL ALSO BECOME INVOLVED IN  
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PAGE 03 NEW DE 11580 031938Z

THE SELECTION OF THE BIHARI "COLLABORATORS", WHO ARE SPECIFIED AS THE FOURTH PREFERENCE CATEGORY TO BE REPATRIATED UNDER THE DELHI AGREEMENT.

3. INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS: INDIA FEELS IT HAS MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR IN THE PAST ITS INTEREST IN TALKS ON RESUMPTION OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS LINKS AND OTHER NORMALIZATION MEASURES ENVISIONED IN THE SIMLA AGREEMENT. IT HAS A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL

OUTSTANDING FOR DISCUSSION OF OVERFLIGHTS. WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT AGHA SHAHI TOLD INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY KEWAL SINGH IN A LETTER IN SEPTEMBER THAT SUCH DISCUSSIONS HAD TO AWAIT COMPLETION OF THE REPATRIATION OF POW'S WHILE OSTENSIBLY INTERESTED IN NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS, INDIA WILL PROBABLY PACE ANY CONCRETE ACTIONS IN THIS DIRECTION WITH ITS PERCEPTION OF BHUTTO'S INTENTIONS. THIS PERCEPTION WILL BE INFLUENCED BY THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF BHUTTO AND OTHER GOP SPOKESMEN, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY EXPECTS AT LEAST A TEMPORARY INCREASE IN ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA WHEN THE POW'S RETURN AND TELL "HORROR" STORIES OF THEIR TREATMENT BY INDIA. BUT KASHMIR IS THE REAL BELL WETHER. SOME MEA OFFICIALS SAY PRIVATELY THEY CAN ACCEPT GOP STATEMENTS ON KASHMIR, EVEN AT THE UN, AS LONG AS THIS DOESN'T BECOME A CAMPAIGN. PUBLICLY, HOWEVER, THESE STATEMENTS AND THE TENDENCY OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS TO PRAISE BHUTTO'S SUPERIOR GAMESMANSHIP GIVE THE GOI TROUBLE AT HOME. INDIAN SUSPICION OF BHUTTO BECOMES ARTICULATED AS A VIEW THAT PAKISTAN IS KEEPING ITS OPTIONS OPEN, THAT INDIA DOESN'T KNOW YET WHETHER BHUTTO WANTS AN END TO CONFRONTATION, AND THAT ONLY THE FUTURE WILL TELL.

4. BHUTTO'S REFERENCE IN NEW YORK TO POSSIBLE FORCE REDUCTIONS BY INDIA AND PAKISTAN PRODUCED SOME INTEREST AT THE WORKING LEVEL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. MORE COMPLETE REPORTS, HOWEVER, MADE IT CLEAR BHUTTO WAS THINKING OF SOME KIND OF PARITY WITH INDIA. THE PRIME MINISTER PUBLICLY RULED OUT DISCUSSIONS ON THIS BASIS IN HER PRESS CONFERENCE IN SRINAGAR SEPTEMBER 29, NOTING INDIA WAS FAR BIGGER THAN PAKISTAN, HAD LARGER FRONTIERS, AND FACED ANOTHER POTENTIAL ENEMY IN THE NORTH.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POW, REFUGEES, REPATRIATION, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** elyme  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS SCHNEIDER  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** elyme  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 AUG 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <27-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <10-Jan-2002 by elyme>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** INDIA- APAKISTAN-BANGLADESH REPATRIATIONS AND AFTER  
**TAGS:** PFOR, IN, PK, BG  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005